



North Texas Food Bank prepares for an increased need as longest government shutdown continues

Organization working with partners to ensure needs are met for food insecure North Texans

DALLAS (JAN 16, 2019) – The longest U.S. Federal Government shut-down in history continues, with many North Texans facing an increased risk for food insecurity as the days go by. The Food Bank is monitoring the situation closely, working with our Feeding Network to identify increased needs.

Currently there are three factors that could lead to an increased need for food assistance:

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) will distribute February benefits to SNAP recipients on January 20, an earlier distribution date than usual. The next potential distribution date for SNAP benefits would be in March. If recipients don't stretch their usage of benefits carefully, they could find themselves in need of food by mid to late February, turning to the charitable sector for assistance.

In addition to changes in SNAP distribution, there is an entire subset of the North Texas population that is employed by the government, and not receiving their paycheck. The Food Bank and our partners want to ensure that the public is aware of how to find emergency food assistance. Visit ntfb.org and click "I need food assistance" to find a nearby agency.

Finally, the Food Bank receives surplus commodities from the United States Department of Agriculture as well as other federal support. Currently, any food that was requested before the shutdown is set to be delivered, though any additional needs are not guaranteed. Because USDA foods are so critical to meeting our mission, and because the months of January and February are historically low donation months from the public, the Food Bank is asking for support from the community to help stock our shelves to meet an increased need in the months ahead.

"The Food Bank is prepared to support hungry North Texans," said Dr. Valerie Hawthorne, Government Relations Director for the North Texas Food Bank. "We are working with our partner agencies to ensure their current and future needs are met. However, a shutdown of this length has never occurred before, causing us to examine our supply sustainability. We are calling on the support of our generous neighbors to help us continue to feed those impacted during these unpredictable times."

There are four ways to get involved and support hungry North Texans:

Donate healthy food: Help the food bank stock the shelves of local food pantries by collecting healthy food items such as canned protein, low sodium soup, dried beans or grains and peanut butter.

Donate funds: When you donate \$1 to the NTFB you are providing access to three nutritious meals.

Donate your time: We need your help on weekdays during January and February visit ntfb.org/volunteer

Donate your voice: We are at a critical moment, reach out to elected officials and advocate for our hungry neighbors.

The North Texas Food Bank (NTFB) is a top-ranked nonprofit hunger-relief organization, serving 13 counties. The Food Bank's administrative headquarters is located in the Dallas Farmers Market, and its new distribution and volunteer center – the Perot Family Campus – opened in Collin County in September 2018. Each day, NTFB provides access to more than 190,000 meals for hungry children, seniors, and families through a network of more than 1,000 programs and more than 200 Partner Agencies. In fiscal year 2018, NTFB provided access to 72 million nutritious meals. While the NTFB is making steady progress toward closing the hunger gap, much work remains to be done to reach the organization's 10- year goal of providing 92 million nutritious meals annually by 2025. To donate, volunteer or advocate, visit www.ntfb.org

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